

U.S. postmaster general resigning

By JEANNINE AVERSA

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WASHINGTON

Postmaster General Marvin Runyon, credited with modernizing the postal service and turning it into a profitable business, announced today that he is resigning.

During his six years at the helm of the nation's largest civilian employer, Runyon, 73, was credited with improving delivery of first-class mail while trimming the administrative staff by 23,000.

He also looked to technology to help speed up mail processing. For instance, he added robotic computers, optical character readers and other computer automations.

The U.S. Postal Service turned a \$1.26 billion profit in 1997 and expects a profitable 1998. The Postal Service's financial successes of 1997 follows profits of \$1.77 billion in



CHITOSE SUZUKI/The Associated Press

Stepping down: U.S. Postmaster General Marvin Runyon applauds during a National Postal Forum in Boston last September. Runyon announced his resignation Wednesday, effective Feb. 15, 1998.

1995 and \$1.57 billion in 1996, after years of red ink. The strong three-year performance trimmed the agency's long-term financial deficiency from \$5.9 billion to \$1.36 billion.

"We have made significant strides in raising our service performance levels, in developing a customer-focused approach to postal issues. ..." Runyon said in a statement.

Runyon's six years at the helm of the nation's largest civilian employer were marred by a conflict of interest investigation that ended last year with him paying \$27,550 as part of a civil settlement.

Runyon was accused of breaking federal law by taking part in talks about placing Coca-Cola machines in post offices. He owned Coke stock at the time. The deal was never completed.

A former executive at automakers Ford and Nissan America, Runyon was named chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority by President Reagan. At the TVA, he earned the nickname "Carvin Marvin" where he slashed the payroll by one-third.

In 1992, the governors of the U.S. Postal Service recruited him to become postmaster general.

Runyon was not immediately available to discuss his plans after leaving the postal service. He has offered to stay on at least into the spring, until a successor is appointed.



STATE

Workers upbeat at word of possible settlement

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — United Parcel Service employees were eager to get back to work as they awaited word from Washington on the details of a tentative contract agreement to settle a 15-day strike.

"If it is what it was represented to be, I predict there will be 100 percent ratification," said Utah driver John Sylvester, a 10-year UPS veteran.

Teamsters secretary-treasurer Ralph Taurone and Teamsters business agent for UPS workers Tom Monthey traveled to Washington, D.C., Tuesday, along with two-member teams from all other Teamsters locals from around

the nation, to review the proposed contract.

If those two-member teams vote to send the contract to union members for ratification, UPS workers could be back on the job on Wednesday and will vote by mail-in ballot. That balloting could take a month.

Utah Teamsters meet Wednesday night for a briefing on the contract proposal.

"Everybody is pleased to be going back to work," said Rusty Hart, business agent for Teamsters Local 222. "We just want to see the final details of the contract before we get too excited."

"Now I won't have to worry

about missing the house payment," said Lee Whitelock, a 22-year UPS employee.

There are about 3,500 UPS employees in the Utah-Idaho district. About 1,500 are union members working under the collective-bargaining agreement.

They walked off the job Aug. 4 after contract negotiations with UPS broke down over pension and full-time employment issues.

Six-year UPS driver Matt Harrop of Ogden said he'll be happy to get back to work. "I was kind of upset with both the union and the company, thinking they were both greedy. I'm just happy it's over."

Mike Norton, a UPS driver from Logan who picketed outside Teamsters offices in Salt Lake last week, said the tentative contract is better than the previous contract.

But he still believes the original contract offer from the company was better for drivers — the reason for his pickets. "I believe the union dragged this strike out much, much longer than necessary," Norton said.

But Jeff Anderson, a UPS driver and union officer, called the settlement a huge victory for organized labor.

"The strike was the first in years that people could identify with," Anderson said. "It

showed that labor is still alive in America."

The strike proved workers can stand up to corporation and win, he said.

Local UPS officials underestimated how hard the Utah employees would strike, he said. For a right-to-work state the strike was "exceptionally successful."

Steve Goodrich, UPS spokesman in Salt Lake City, said, "We're glad that we've got an opportunity to get back to the business of taking care of the customers."

He said he does not know how much business UPS will lose in the long term due to the strike.

Despite profits, postal panel OKs price hike

Associated Press

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WASHINGTON — Despite three years of billion-dollar postal profits, the independent Postal Rate Commission on Monday agreed to a post office request to raise the price of stamps by a penny.

The increase could take place later this summer.

The commission chided the Postal Service for not delaying its request to provide more up-to-date information on costs and expenses.

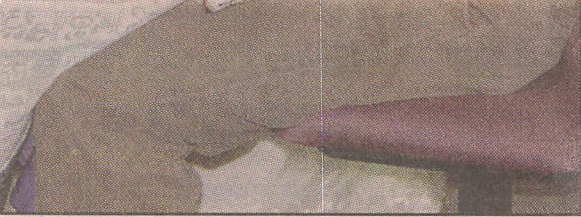
But in the end, the commission agreed to most of what the Postal Service had asked for.

It approved the 1-cent increase in first-class letters and a series of increases for other types of mail.

“These changes will provide added funds to enable the Postal Service to proceed with its plans to spend \$5.6 billion on equipment and service enhancement programs in the 1998 fiscal year,” the commission said in announcing its decision.

But the commission noted that it had asked the post office, in light of its recent profits, to delay its request and send more up-to-date information for the panel to consider.

That would have meant a delay of about three months.



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**signs autographs at Orem Junior High Friday after
assembly to introduce academic award program.**

Wednesday, during which he will make the rounds of his supporters in Congress and among American Jews and will give several interviews. The main event on his schedule is a conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, the potent pro-Israeli lobby, where he is certain of a rousing chorus of indignation over the administration's pressure.

While Dennis Ross, Clinton's

ahn upbeat in Bosnia